

In re Patent Application of
BURR, JR. ET AL.
Serial No. 09/995,969
Filed: NOVEMBER 28, 2001

REMARKS

Applicants wish to thank the Examiner for his thorough examination of the present application and for identifying allowable subject matter in Claims 2-8, 10, 12-16, and 18-21. The patentability of the claims is discussed in greater detail below. Favorable reconsideration is respectfully requested.

I. The Claimed Invention

Independent Claim 1, for example, is directed to a method of controlling the operation of a plurality of transceiver stations from a master site. The method includes (a) transmitting, from the master site to the transceiver stations, a general application information signal that is retransmitted by each of the transceiver stations. The method also includes (b) storing, in a respective transceiver station, a sequence of commands which, when invoked, cause the respective transceiver station to perform a respective sequence of actions, including the transmission of one or more additional specific application information signals, other than the general application information signal as received from the master site and retransmitted by the respective transceiver station, and wherein the respective sequence of actions of one transceiver station is not necessarily the same as, and can be expected to be different from the respective sequence of actions of another transceiver station of the plurality of transceiver stations. The method also includes (c) transmitting, from the master site to each of the transceiver stations, a prescribed command signal; and

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(d) at each of the transceiver stations, receiving the prescribed command signal transmitted from the master site in step (c) and, in response thereto, invoking the respective sequence of commands stored in step (b), and thereby causing each respective transceiver station to perform a respective sequence of actions associated with the respective sequence of commands stored thereby.

Independent Claim 9 is directed to a store and forward communication system including a master site transmitter which is operative to transmit a general application information signal to a plurality of transceiver stations. The plurality of transceiver stations are operative to receive and retransmit the general application information signal. The master site is further operative to controllably transmit a prescribed command signal to each of the transceiver stations. A respective transceiver station containing a storage unit storing a sequence of commands which, when executed, cause the respective transceiver station to perform a respective sequence of actions, including the transmission of one or more additional specific application information signals, other than the general application information signal as received from the master site transmitter and retransmitted by the respective transceiver station. A respective sequence of actions of one transceiver station is not necessarily the same as, and can be expected to be different than, the respective sequence of actions of another transceiver station of the plurality of transceiver stations. Each of the transceiver stations includes a command signal processor, which is operative to access and execute a sequence of commands stored in the storage unit, in response to receipt

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of the prescribed command signal, and thereby cause the each respective transceiver station to perform a respective potentially locally unique sequence of actions associated with the accessed sequence of commands.

Independent Claim 17 is directed to a store and forward receiver for use with a respective rebroadcasting station of a multistation network having a master site transmitter which transmits a general application information signal to a plurality of rebroadcasting stations. The respective rebroadcasting station is operative to receive and retransmit the general application information signal. The store and forward receiver includes a demodulator, which is operative to demodulate a signal transmitted to the plurality of rebroadcast stations from the master site transmitter containing the general application information signal and a control channel. A rebroadcast signal transport path is coupled to the demodulator and is operative to coupled the general application information signal to rebroadcasting equipment of the respective rebroadcasting station for rebroadcast thereby. A command signal processor is coupled to the demodulator and the rebroadcast signal transport path, and which is operative, in response to receipt of a prescribed command in the control channel of the signal transmitted from the master site transmitter to the plurality of rebroadcasting stations, to access a sequence of commands stored in a storage unit therefore. The command signal processor also causes the execution of respective actions associated with the sequence of commands, including play back through the rebroadcast signal transport path of one or more auxiliary information

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files stored in the storage unit, interleaved with portions of the general application information signal being rebroadcast by the respective transceiver.

II. Claims 1, 9, 11, and 17 Are Patentable

The Examiner rejected Claims 1, 9, 11, and 17 as unpatentable over the Corts et al. patent. The Corts et al. patent discloses a system for coordinating the transmission of supplemental data with a broadcast signal by a black box located at each broadcast station. The Examiner correctly notes that the Corts et al. patent discloses a radio station developing procedures for aggregating and managing the combined regular program plus other content such as weather, news, traffic, etc. The Corts et al. patent further discloses:

"A multipurpose Internet appliance (or 'black box' as shown in the Figures 4, 6, and 7), which resides within each individual radio station to perform a multitude of actions necessary for a successful datacast. The primary function of the black box is to prepare datacast elements in a manner that constitutes a datacast and then interface with an IBOC encoding device to dispense that datacast." (See paragraph [0096]).

"A key aspect of Data Scheduling that should be noted is that the system of the present invention does not enable the Traffic Manager to specify exactly the number of times Datacast Content displays over a specific period. Datacast Content is not associated with a station cut number ("cut"), rather it is inserted when the black box has determined that there is an opportunity to do so, thus recognizing an OCA." (See paragraph [0158]).

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In contrast, independent Claim 1, for example, is directed to a method of controlling the operation of a plurality of transceiver stations from a master site. The method includes transmitting, from the master site to the transceiver stations, a general application information signal that is retransmitted by each of the transceiver stations. The method further includes transmitting, from the master site to each of the transceiver stations, a prescribed command signal, and at each of the transceiver stations, receiving the prescribed command signal and, in response thereto, invoking the respective sequence of commands stored in step (b), and thereby causing each respective transceiver station to perform a respective sequence of actions associated with the respective sequence of commands stored thereby. In other words, the master site is different than the plurality of transceiver stations, and the master site transmits the general application information signal and the prescribed command signal.

The Examiner asserts that a "master controller" inserts data into the broadcast stream, and the master controller is the black box in the Corts et al. patent. The black box cannot cause other transceiver stations to perform a respective sequence of actions, in response to a prescribed command signal transmitted from the master site. The Corts et al. patent, therefore, fails to disclose the master site recited by the claims. Independent Claims 9 and 17 include similar recitations to independent Claim 1.

Accordingly, independent Claims 1, 9, and 17 are patentable. The dependent claims, which recite yet further

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distinguishing features of the invention, are also patentable and require no further discussion herein.

CONCLUSIONS

In view of the arguments presented above, it is submitted that all of the claims are patentable. Accordingly, a Notice of Allowance is respectfully requested in due course. Should any minor informalities need to be addressed, the Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,



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CERTIFICATE OF FACSIMILE TRANSMISSION

I HEREBY CERTIFY that the foregoing correspondence has been forwarded via facsimile number 703-872-9306 to the Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450 this 4th day of May, 2005.

